

THE CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

VOL. II.] *Richmond, (Va.) Saturday, September 14, 1816.* [NO. 1.

THE Editor of this paper, after a longer suspension than had been anticipated, resumes his labours. It is due to the subscribers to explain the causes of this delay.

The former printer and publisher has declined the business, as at the expiration of the year, he had a right to do, and has turned his attention to other concerns. This made it necessary for the Editor to make new arrangements for publication. In the City of Richmond, very little printing but that of newspapers is carried on. It requires no little time then, in these circumstances to employ another printer, make new contracts for a regular supply of paper, and arrange every detail for the printing and satisfactory distribution of a periodical work such as the Monitor. It is hoped that these reasons will be thought sufficient to account for the delay of which, complaint has been made, without any imputation of blame to the Editor.

At the suggestion of a number of Subscribers, some of them friends for whose judgment great respect is entertained, a few changes will be made in this new series of the Monitor, which it is hoped will be found advantageous.

1. The quality of the paper will be considerably better than that heretofore used; and of course, the style of printing will be improved.

2. Instead of a weekly publication of eight octavo pages, there will be issued a number, once in two weeks, of sixteen pages of the same size. This will afford a small increase in the quantity of matter in the year, as the space occupied by twenty-six titles of the paper will be saved. It will in general, allow greater variety; and at the same time, afford the opportunity in many instances, of giving that entire, which under the old arrangement must have been divided, and distributed among two or more different No's.

3. Somewhat more room will be allowed for original matter, without however deviating from the plan at first announced, of paying particular attention to the interesting events which every day are taking place in the Christian world.

In the original as well as selected pieces, a little more latitude than heretofore, will be allowed. This determination has been adopted principally because the all important subject of education, is likely to attract considerable attention, and create no weak interest among the

good people of Virginia. This is a matter of such deep and general concernment, the character and prosperity of the State are so involved in the course which public sentiment may take in relation to it, that the Monitor would think himself guilty of unpardonable negligence, should he not open the columns of his paper to any well written essays on the subject; or to temperate remarks on any thing on this topic, that may be presented for public acceptance.

It is a proverbial saying among Ecclesiastics, that "whenever Jesus Christ builds a Church, the Devil will build a Chappel hard-by." The remark perhaps holds universally. Rarely have attempts to do good been unaccompanied by efforts of meddling, wrong-headed people to do mischief. A spirit of improvement is not often awakened without the coterporaneous excitement of a rage for innovation. No passion is more refractory and untameable than this. So headlong, so rash, so ungovernable has it ordinarily shown itself to be, that frequently prudent and sober men have been almost afraid to attempt improvement, least the result should be innovation instead of amendment. The present age seems remarkably prone to indulge wild speculations, and adopt untried theories on the subject of education. Our own citizens have continually laid themselves open to vain pretenders to superior skill in this important business, and have paid high prices to numbers whose claims have had no support but such as their puffing advertisements could afford. In all probability, we shall suffer an inundation of visionary schemes, of untried theories of education, as the noble plans laid by the last Legislature of Virginia advance to their completion. In anticipation of these things; appreciating too the importance of the subject, we earnestly invite our friends to turn their attention to it, and will gladly give currency, as far as our paper circulates, to any thing calculated to enlighten the mind, or communicate information of real importance to our citizens.

It is thought, farther, that without detriment to the Monitor, it may assume somewhat of a literary cast: nay that its usefulness would be greatly increased, were it made instrumental in exciting or encreasing a literary spirit among its readers. The Editor has heartily adopted this opinion, and will receive with gratitude, communications of this sort from his correspondents.

And farther still, the Editor will have no objection sometimes to relax the gravity of a Monitor, and join in a laugh with any whose object is to laugh vice and folly out of countenance.

— Ridentem dicere verum

Quid vetat?

HOR.

Should it be supposed by any that this will be acting out of character, the Monitor, instead of relying upon the quotation of the heathen poet as authority, would appeal to the conduct of the inspired prophet.—“Cry aloud” said Elijah to the Priests of Baal “for he is a god: “either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or “peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked”! In like manner, the prophet Isaiah, in the 44th Chapter, with pungency and force unequalled, ridicules the folly and stupidity of idolatry. If then on the authority of such examples, any of the correspondents of the Monitor, should be disposed to turn that into ridicule, which offends good taste, violates the laws of decorum, or injures the interests of morality, the Editor will not be so severe as to exclude their communications. Mere amusement, however, will not at any time be our object. Life is so short, and eternity is so long; the things of the present world are so evanescent, and comparatively so trivial, while those of the next are so permanent, so grand, so awful, that a Christian is hardly at liberty to do any thing entirely without reference to the final account, the judgment of the great and terrible day of the Lord, and that everlasting state which awaits us all.

The Editor recommences his labours with deep anxiety. He knows something by experience of the difficulty of the work in which he is engaged; and remembers the responsibility under which he lies not merely to his subscribers, but to God the judge of all, to whom we must answer for what we write, as well as for what we think and speak. To the guidance of his good Spirit he looks, and on his grace he depends to make this paper instrumental in promoting the best interests of his fellow men, and the glory of the great Creator.

The Editor hopes that the friends of religion and learning, who have ability to instruct, will make use of his paper as a vehicle of their reasonings, reproofs and admonitions; and thus extend their usefulness through a wider sphere than perhaps they otherwise would.

With these preliminary remarks, the Editor commits his paper to the indulgence of his Subscribers, and commends it and them to the blessing of God, without which, nothing can prosper, nothing be useful.

Original Communications.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MONITOR.

Encouragements to Zeal and Activity.

IT is a sure effect of the religion of Jesus Christ, that it expands with benevolence every heart into which it enters. In proportion as we

have "tasted that the Lord is gracious," we become earnestly desirous that others may partake with us in the unspeakable blessing. The Christian does not wish to go alone to heaven. He looks abroad with tender commiseration upon those who are yet in their sins, and longs for the salvation of the whole human family. Under these impressions he gives himself up to active exertion, that he may become an instrument, in whatever degree God pleases, of extending the kingdom of heavenly mercy to all the ends of the earth. It is indeed a glorious object of pursuit. But we have many obstacles to encounter, many enemies to overcome, visible and invisible. We are vehemently opposed in our design by the native and utter depravity of the children of Adam; by the corrupt maxims, passions and habits of an ungodly world; and by all the subtle machinations of our grand adversary the devil, whose bitter enmity never abates, and whose activity in the work of destruction never slumbers. In this arduous conflict, I often find my own soul too prone to despondency. I have tried, and I hope not altogether in vain, to re-enforce my faith and patience by resorting to the following considerations. They are humbly suggested to my fellow Christians, that they also may be cheered and encouraged.

I reflect that thousands and hundreds of thousands of faithful servants of God are engaged in the same holy cause which I am labouring to promote. What matters it that few of these are near me, or personally known to me? However we may be scattered over distant regions, so that we shall never know each other's names or places of abode on this side of eternity; yet we know that our design is one, and that the most endearing sympathy and good-will unite us together in indissoluble bonds. We are intimately confederated as members of one body, and the Son of God is our Head. Through him we all enjoy a precious mutual communion, notwithstanding our dispersions; and under his smiles we feel the animating spirit of universal co-operation in advancing his glory, and subserving the salvation of those for whom he died. When I go to the throne of grace to pray that God would pity our long desolations, and pour out his reviving Spirit upon me and my beloved people; is it not a cheering consideration that multitudes elsewhere are supplicating for the same blessing, not only for themselves, but for us likewise? When I am about to preach the gospel to a cold, unfeeling audience, and find my heart sinking within me into a gloomy despair of doing any good; may I not take courage from the thought that thousands of my brethren in the ministry, and tens of thousands of other Christians, are probably at the very moment calling upon God to help me, and crown my poor exertions in his cause with success? Are the prayers of God's children to be rated as a trifle? No, surely. Arise then, my soul, from thy dispiriting and pernicious depression; remembering that the army of thy fellow soldiers is exceedingly large, and that the weapon of prayer is not put into our hands in vain.

This connects itself with a consideration still more rich in comfort and encouragement. In our efforts to save sinners from perdition, the Lord God Almighty is with us. He has appointed us our stations in his vine-yard. It is his business in which we are employed. I have found something very affecting in that declaration of our Saviour to his dis-

ciples, "Ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." This presence of his Father was infinitely more supporting and consolatory than the company of legions of men or angels could have been without it. And may we not apply our Master's words, in some measure, to ourselves; to our trials and afflictions in his service? We cannot see the eternal God with our eyes; yet he is evermore present with his people. He is the observant Witness, the gracious Patron, of every sincere attempt to extend his kingdom in the world. Were I the only true Christian upon earth, my duties must be discharged; and my toils would not be fruitless in working out my own salvation, and aiming to accomplish the salvation of others. Though forsaken of men, I should not be alone; my Father and my God would be with me. However mysterious the dispensations of divine grace may be, we ought to believe that no endeavour to glorify the name of our God can possibly be lost. In some way or other, every fervent petition sent up to his throne, every self-denying enterprise in the war against sin and hell, must avail something toward the sublime ends for which the gospel was instituted. Does it not merit our serious enquiry, fellow Christians, whether we may not be guilty of abusing the doctrine that God dispenses his grace in a sovereign, unsearchable way, by aiming to shelter under it our own indolence and apathy? Perhaps, while we feel very little zeal in the performance of our duties, very little concern about their efficacy in the conversion and sanctification of sinners; we sit down at our ease, and console ourselves respecting the wretched state of things around us, by the idea that God bestows his blessings when and where he will, by a way to us inscrutable. Bear with me, I beseech you. Have we, in our remissness and insensibility, any right to apply to ourselves this soothing balm? How can we know, until we make a far more vigorous and agonizing experiment, in what degree our Sovereign Lord connects the means of his appointment with the direct consummation of their purpose? O let us rise in the strength of our God, and resolve to try how far our example, our prayers, our private counsels and reproofs, or our public ministrations, may be prospered in delivering our fellow men from the power of Satan, and preparing them for a happy immortality.

This leads me to mention my last encouragement; namely, that this appears emphatically to be the time, "the set time," in which God has resolved to be favourable to his Zion, by answering the cries of his children, and giving effect to their strenuous exertions in the cause of religion. I am led to draw this conclusion by the exhilarating news which I receive from various parts of the world. It is an extraordinary season of mercy from above. We hear of revivals uncommonly extensive, durable and powerful; especially in some portions of our own country. We gaze with astonishment upon the career and the success of bible, and missionary, and tract societies. We rejoice in the multiplication of preachers, qualified to be burning and shining lights in the Church. We see that "many are running to and fro, and knowledge is increased," not only throughout Christendom, but in the benighted heathen lands. Do not these things announce to us that the darkness is fast passing away; that the dawn of the glorious latter day is commenc-

ing? Brethren dearly beloved, let us with gladness and gratitude listen to the voice of our heavenly Father, who seems to call to us loudly by his kind providences: 'Awake, my servants, from your lethargy. Arise, and be doing. For behold, I pour out my Spirit in copious showers, and your labours shall be blessed. Now is the time, beyond any which your eyes have seen, that I will cause my gospel "to have free course, and be glorified." Now, in this my acceptable hour, do I require your most importunate prayers; and the most unwearied activity of your hearts, your tongues, your pens, in the great work in which my own arm is engaged. Now do I demand the liberal contribution of your substance to my treasury, for achieving the renovation of the world. Let the poor widow give her mite, and the rich their abundance; for all shall be prospered alike. "Behold, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to the harvest." Away with your sluggishness, and your desponding fears. The period so long expected by my faithful ones is at hand, when the nations shall bow to the sceptre of my Son, and the whole earth shall be filled with my glory.'

Thou God of boundless love! May our inmost souls obey thy word, and spring forth with renewed alacrity to the performance of our respective duties!

PHILANDER.

On the Immortality of the Soul.

And is it so? Have I indeed a soul
Which shall escape the prison of the tomb;
Shall soar aloft when planets cease to roll,
And look unhurt on nature's final doom?

A soul which shall exist, and know, and feel,—
Transporting thought!—while endless years endure:
Years everlasting only can reveal
How rich the gift,—and God has made it sure.

Yet with my triumph well may fear combine,—
A soul immortal trusted to my care!
Destin'd in glory to exult and shine,
Or sink to hell, the victim of despair.

Celestial Wisdom, 'take me by the hand,
For I, alas, am blind and prone to stray:
Bow me, Almighty Grace, to thy command,
And guide me safely to eternal day.

Distress removed by the Cross of Christ.

With loads of guilt opprest
I strove in vain to fly,
My conscience found no rest,
I saw no refuge nigh;
Helpless, expos'd to endless pain,
I sunk, for all my hopes were slain,

'Twas then, o'erwhelm'd with wo,
 I heard the gospel's sound,
 It sweetly bade me go
 To Calv'ry's hallow'd ground;
 To lift my weeping eyes and see
 The Lamb of God who died for me.

What wonders strike me here,
 How awful is the place!
 What glorious forms appear
 Of justice and of grace!
 The Son of God expires to buy
 Pardon for man, and bliss on high,

While near his Cross I stand
 I view my guilt enlarg'd,
 Yet from death's iron hand
 I feel my soul discharg'd;
 I see that God is reconcil'd,
 I hear him own me for his child.

My gloomy fears of wrath
 Away forever fly,
 I mark the sacred path
 That leads me to the sky;
 My Father's animating voice
 Bids me go forward and rejoice.

Jesus what shall I say
 Of all thy love to me?
 Nought can I thee repay,
 Thy blessings must be free;
 Yet will I serve thee as my King,
 And evermore thy praises sing.

FROM THE NEW YORK CHRISTIAN HERALD.
FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

By the late arrivals from England, several periodical publications for May and June have been received, containing accounts of the proceedings and reports of the great Religious Institutions which hold their anniversary meetings in the spring of the year.

The Missionary and Bible intelligence is of the most interesting description. We are enabled in this Number to give only a small part of that intelligence. More copious extracts shall appear in our next.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The 12th Anniversary Meeting was held at Freemason's Hall, on Wednesday the 1st of May.

The meeting was attended by H. R. H. the Duke of Kent, the Bishops of Norwich, Salisbury, Gloucester, Cloyne, and Clogher; Lords Gambier

and Calthorpe; the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Wilberforce, many members of the House of Commons, and a very large assembly of other gentlemen.

Lord Teignmouth read an abridgment of the Report of its proceedings during the past year. It exhibited a luminous and most interesting view of the operations of the Society, the beneficial effects of which are extending in every quarter of the globe. The exertions to promote its object in the vast Russian empire, where the magnanimous Alexander has recommended that a new translation of the whole Bible be immediately made, into the vernacular dialect of the native Russians; and persons of all ranks, both in Church and State, assiduously attend the committees of the various Bible Societies, excite the astonishment of the religious public in this country, and call forth gratitude to the God of all grace, who hath honoured Britain by permitting its inhabitants to be the instruments of kindling such a holy flame in other nations.

The various resolutions were moved and seconded respectively by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Bishop of Gloucester; by Charles Barclay, Esq. M. P. and the Bishop of Salisbury; by the Hon. Charles Shore, son of the President, and the Rev. William Roby, of Manchester; by the Bishop of Clogher, and Luke Howard, Esq. one of the society of Friends; by Lord Gambier, and the Rev. John Frederic Usko, formerly chaplain at Smyrna; by the Rev. Dr. Thorpe of Dublin, and R. H. Inglis, Esq.; by the Bishop of Cloyne, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting; by the Bishop of Norwich, and the Rev. William Heirulf, chaplain to the Danish Embassy; and by Charles Grant, Esq. M. P. jun.

The best spirit pervaded the several addresses; and their effect on the meeting was quite consonant with the principles and objects of this magnificent institution.

It appeared that the receipts of the year had amounted to 92,860/2s 9d St. (about \$ 412,700) and the expenditures to 103,680/18s 8d St. (upwards of \$ 460,600.) The copies of the Scriptures issued from March 31st, 1815, to March of the present year, amount to 138,168 Bibles, and 110,068 New Testaments; making the total number of copies of both kinds issued from the commencement of the institution, to be 1,482,073, which together with 75,000 copies circulated at the charge of the Society from depositories abroad, makes a grand total of 1,557,973 copies circulated by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The 22nd General Meeting was held in London on the 8th, 9th, and 10th of May.

The Report comprises a brief account of the present state of the Missions in the following order: Otaheite, China, Java, (Batavia and Samarang,) Amboyna, Ceylon, Bengal, Madras, Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Bellary, Tinevelley, Mauritius, Surat, Lascars, Cape of Good Hope, Stellenbosch, Rodezand, Caledon, High-Krall, Bethelsdorp, Theopolis, Caffraria, Bushmen, Griqua Town, Bethesda, Klip Fountain, Africaner's Krall, Pella, North America, and West Indies, Seminary at Gosport, Conclusion.

That part of the Report which relates to South Africa is unusually

interesting. The following extract from it, will doubtless be acceptable to our readers, particularly the speech of a converted Hottentot, which is a fine specimen of natural, untutored eloquence.

BETHELSDORP, about 600 miles East of the Cape.

This settlement is rightly named; it has proved to hundreds of souls no other than a BETH-EL—"the house of God, and the gate of Heaven." When we view the intelligence received from this highly favoured spot within the last two years, we are constrained to cry, What hath God wrought! for in no place under the patronage of this Society, and at no period since its commencement, have such wonders of mercy been displayed.

It would occupy too much of the time of this meeting, to present even an outline of the extensive information with which Mr. Read and others have furnished the Directors. Suffice it to say, that about 1200 people belong this settlement. Since its commencement, 442 adults have been baptised, 200 of whom have been added to the Church during the last year. The Hottentots belonging to this settlement have paid taxes to the government to the amount of nearly 500*l* st. in one year, (about \$3555) They have contributed to the funds of this Society 120*l* st.; they are now building, at their own expense, a school room and a printing office, under the same roof; they make collections for the poor every Lord's day, and send out into the surrounding countries a number of itinerants, by whom the knowledge of the Gospel is happily diffused.

The grateful feelings of these converted Heathen, brought by the Gospel into a new world, may be conceived of by the following speech, the honest effusion of a poor Hottentot, at one of their public meetings:

"We are all Hottentots: we never had a house: we never were considered as human beings: we never were allowed to look into a farmer's house: but to-day we are sitting here together in a large white house, (*the place of worship.*) We never had a waggon: and now there are more than twenty waggons belonging to us Hottentots. Look at the women. They never had decent clothes: now you see them sitting among us in white, and various colours. We never had the honour of knowing any thing of God and his Word: but now we can read and write; and the greatest thing which God has favoured us with, is his sending to us poor Hottentots his servants, who daily explain to us his holy Word.

"Is not this altogether the grace of God! Love of God! Mercy of God! Men, brethren, Hottentots, praise the Lord God Almighty!"

The receipts of the last year amounting to 22,971*l* 17*s* 11*d* Sterling, (upwards of one hundred thousand dollars,) and the disbursements to 19,291*l* 17*s* 9*d*. Sterling, (about 85,740 dollars.)

The collections made at the several places of the meetings amounted to 1165*l* 4*s* 6*d*. Sterling, (about 5180 dollars.)

SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY—INSTITUTED IN 1785.

On Monday the annual meeting was held at the city of London Tavern. From the Report, it appeared, that the Society has added 279 schools within the last year to its general list; four of which have been established in the West Indies, and several in the Scilly Islands. The total number of books given at the Society's expense since the commencement of the institution, is 436,297 spelling books, 87,092 New Testaments, and 8,177 Bibles, for the use of 4791 schools, containing upwards of four hundred thousand scholars.

FROM THE RECORDER.

MR. GRIFFIN'S SPEECH.

[*The following is the speech of George Griffin, esq. delivered before a meeting held in the City of New-York. immediately after the formation of the American Bible Society.*]

MR. CHAIRMAN,

I AM persuaded that there is no person present, who does not feel the inspiration of this occasion. For myself, I congratulate my country, that we now find on her annals the name of the America Bible Society. This is an occasion to awaken the best feelings of the heart. We are assembled, not to rouse the rancour of political zeal;—not to arrange plans of foreign conquest;—not to shout the triumphs of victory:—We have a nobler object:—to aid the march of the everlasting Gospel through the world,—to spread abroad a fountain, whose waters are intended for the healing of the nations.

The design of this august institution is not merely to relieve the wants of our own country, but to extend the hand of charity to the most distant lands; to break asunder the fetters of Mahometan imposture; to purify the abominations of Juggernaut; to snatch the Hindoo widow from the funeral pile; to raise the degraded African to the sublime contemplation of God and immortality; to tame and baptise in the waters of life the American Savage; to pour the light of heaven upon the darkness of the Andes; and to call back the nations from the altars of devils to the temple of the living God. These high objects are to be accomplished by the universal promulgation of the Bible; the Bible—that volume conceived in the councils of eternal mercy, containing the wondrous story of redeeming love; blazing with the lustre of Jehovah's glory:—That volume, pre-eminently calculated to soften the heart, sanctify the affections, and elevate the soul of man; to enkindle the poet's fire, and teach the philosopher wisdom; to consecrate the domestic relations; to pour the balm of heaven into the wounded heart, to cheer the dying hour, and shed the light of immortality upon the darkness of the tomb. I reiterate the mighty term—the Bible; that richest of man's treasures—that best of Heaven's gifts. Amazing volume! In every of thy pages, I see the impress of the Godhead. How divine are thy doctrines, how pure thy precepts, how sublime thy language!—How unassuming is the tenderness of an Otway, or an Euripides, when compared with the heart-touching pathos of thy David or Jeremiah!—How do the loftiest effusions of a Milton or a Homer sink, when contrasted with the sublimer strains of thine Isaiah or Habakkuk! And how do the pure and soul-elevating doctrines of thy Moses or thy Paul look down, as from the height of Heaven, upon the grovelling systems of a Mahomet. or Confucius! Give this Bible an empire in every heart, and the prevalence of crime and misery would yield to the universal diffusion of millennial glory. Destroy this Bible; let the ruthless arm of infidelity tear this sun from the moral heavens, and all would be darkness, guilt and wretchedness; again would

“Earth [feel] the wound, and nature from her seat,
 “Sighing through all her works, [give] signs of woe,
 “That all was lost.”

Eighteen centuries ago, the divine author of our religion, about to ascend to his native heavens, pronounced with his farewell voice, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." A little band of Christian heroes obeyed the heavenly mandate; and, clothed in their master's armour, encountered and overcame the united powers of earth and hell. But the apostolic age did not always last. Seventeen hundred years have since elapsed, and more than three-fourths of the human family are still enveloped in Pagan or Mahometan darkness.—A lethargy, like the sleep of the sepulchre, had long fastened itself on the Christian world. It was the tremendous earthquake of modern atheism, that roused them from this slumber: and while, during the last twenty years, the vials of God's wrath have been pouring upon the nations, convulsing to its centre this distracted globe, the Bible has recommenced its triumphs. This tree of heaven's planting has stood and strengthened amidst the prostrations of thrones, and the concussion of empires. The apostolic age is returning. The countries of Europe, which lately rung with the clangor of arms, are now filled with Societies for the promulgation of the Gospel of peace. Through those fields, but lately drenched in human blood, now flow the streams of salvation. Europe is bending under the mighty effort of extending redemption to a world. Kings and Emperors are vying with the humblest of their subjects in this stupendous work. The coffers of the rich are emptied into heaven's treasury, and there also is received the widow's mite.—But there is one nation which has stood forth pre-eminent in this career of glory. With the profoundest veneration, I bow before the majesty of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This illustrious association, (its history is recorded in heaven, and ought to be proclaimed on earth,) has been instrumental in distributing a million and a half of volumes of the word of life; and has magnanimously expended, in a single year, near four hundred thousand dollars for the salvation of man. This transcendent institution is the brightest star in the constellation of modern improvements, and looks down from its celestial elevation on the diminished glories of the Grecian and Roman name.

The electric shock has at length reached our shores. Local Bible Societies have been heretofore established in this country; but they want extent of means, comprehensiveness of design, and consolidation of action. It was to be expected, and the Christian word had a right to expect, that the American nation would arise in the majesty of its collected might, and unite itself with the other powers of Christendom, in the holy confederacy for extending the empire of religion and civilization. This auspicious era has arrived. The last week has witnessed an august assemblage of the fathers of the American churches, of every denomination, convened in this metropolis from all parts of the country, not to brandish the sword of religious controversy, but to unite with one heart, in laying the foundation of the majestic superstructure of the American Bible Society. Athens boasted of her temple of Minerva; but our city is more truly consecrated, by being the seat of this hallowed edifice.—It is not a mosque containing, or reputed to contain, the remains of the Arabian prophet, but a fabric reared and devoted to the living God, by the united efforts of the American Churches. Fellow-Citizens! will you

coldly receive this honor, or will you not rather show yourselves worthy of this sacred distinction? I am persuaded, that your munificence and zeal in this holy cause will be recorded as an animating example to the nation. For to whom should it be reserved to electrify this western continent, but to the London of America? Our country has long stood forth the rival of England in commerce and in arms; let her not be left behind in the glorious career of evangelizing the world.

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MR. JAY'S SPEECH.

PETER A. JAY, *having seconded the motion of Mr. Griffin, supported it by an address to the following effect:*

MR. CHAIRMAN,—Allow me, sir, to second the motion which has just been made, and at the same time, to congratulate this assembly on the event which has called them together, and upon the unanimity with which it has been brought about. When we consider the multiplied divisions which exist in this extensive country; the animosities of political parties, the multitude of our religious sects, the local interests and jealousies, that have so often impeded or defeated the most salutary undertakings, we have reason to be astonished at the perfect unanimity, which has, in this instance, prevailed among delegates from widely distant parts of the union, and of various political and religious denominations. It marks, indeed, the finger of Providence, that always provides means for the accomplishment of its own great and beneficent purposes.

Under Providence, this unanimity can only be ascribed to the strong sense of duty in those who composed the Constitution, which we have heard, and to the singleness of object they had in view. The latter, I esteem the great characteristic, which I trust will render the American Bible Society an honor to the country, and a blessing to the world.

Our efforts in the great cause of diffusing Christianity, when compared with those of other nations, have hitherto been puny. Not that we have wanted means: for, except during a short interval, we have been blessed with peace and with abundance. Nor will I impute it to want of zeal for the happiness of mankind. But our efforts have been separately made, and were therefore, feeble. We have now a common centre in which we can unite; we have now a cause in which we all can join. Our object is to distribute the Holy Scriptures without note or comment. At this, no politician can be alarmed, no sectary can be reasonably jealous. We shall distribute no other book, we shall teach no disputed doctrines. Laying aside for this purpose the banners of our respective corps, we assemble under the sole standard of the great Captain of our salvation. We endeavor to extend his reign, and in his name alone we contend.

Need I mention the importance of the great object we have in view? It has been already so eloquently displayed, that I shall not attempt it. But I may be permitted to notice some minor topics which have been less insisted on. Do we wish to improve the *temporal* condition of the human race? Then experience has shown, that Christianity is the most efficient agent. Survey the world—Where have barbarism and ignorance, and superstition, and cruelty, and all the demons of darkness their abodes? Where, but in those unhappy regions that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, deprived of the light of the gospel of Christ.

And where do you find knowledge, and humanity, and charity? Where do the sciences and the arts reside? Where does commerce flourish? Where does liberty dwell? No where but in the Christian world.

Christianity enlarges the mind, while it purifies the heart. It expands our views, it animates us with the most powerful motives, and while it teaches that we are members of the great family of mankind, it enables us to perform the duties which that relation imposes.

While Mahomedan nations have long been stationary or retrograde; while the inhabitants of India continue to practice their bloody and abominable rites; while most other pagans are sunk almost below the condition of the brutes that perish; the Christian world has advanced with rapid strides in civilization, in wealth, in humanity, in every thing that contributes to temporal prosperity, as well as in the virtues which fit us for immortality.

It may be objected, that what are termed the dark ages, succeeded the promulgation of the Christian religion. But why were those ages dark? Because the light of the Gospel was hid. The Bible was concealed with jealous care from the people. It could be read only in an unknown tongue by the clergy themselves. The laity, like the Abyssinians of the present day, were but nominally Christians, knowing little of their Redeemer, except his name; and having no religion but outward ceremonies and empty forms. At length the Reformation dispersed the clouds of ignorance, disenthralled both the bodies and the minds of men, and laid the foundation of civil as well as of religious liberty. The Gospel was again promulgated, its doctrines were taught, inquiry was awakened, corruptions were purified, and at length, even the Church from which the Protestants separated, has been greatly reformed. Since that glorious era, knowledge has been uniformly increased, and with it, all that adorns society, and all that sweetens life. That Gospel light which dawned at the Reformation, has since grown brighter and brighter. Its beams, though occasionally obscured by clouds, have become more and more fervent, till at length darting from the meridian, they warm as well as enlighten.

The nations of Europe are now awake and active; they have sent forth the gospel into all lands, and its sound unto the ends of the earth. Their exertions are strenuous and unremitted. They eagerly emulate each other in the glorious strife. And shall we alone be idle? Blest as we are with opulence and ease, shall we be less grateful to Him who gives them, than nations wasted with war?

Surely, sir, we shall not refuse to run the race which is set before us, nor to contribute towards the cause of mankind. What charity can be greater; to what can there be stronger motives?

How many are there who thirst for military glory; and what sacrifices would they not make to obtain it! We have long been spectators of the great tragedy which has been acted on the theatre of Europe, and our imaginations have become inflamed. We have beheld mighty hosts encountering each other; desperate battles fought, and victories won.—We think of the triumphant march, the blood stained banner, the captured artillery, and all the pride, pomp and circumstances of glorious war, till many among us would willingly face danger and death itself, to acquire a renown equal to that of some favorite hero. Yet the laurel

of the conqueror grows only on a soil which is moistened with blood. It is stained with the tears of the widow, and it thrives in the midst of desolation—Nor is it durable: amid all the annals of destruction, how few are the names which we remember and pronounce! But is there glory which is pure and enduring, and which deserves to be sought? Yes, the love of fame is a noble passion, given us not to be extinguished, but to be used aright. There is a glory which a wise man will covet, which a good man will aspire to, which will follow him from this world to the next, and there, in the presence of an assembled universe of angels, and of just men made perfect, place a crown upon his brows that fadeth not away.

It is the peculiar province of the clergy to teach how to acquire this heavenly crown; but I may be permitted to say, that an irrevocable decree has gone forth, an inviolable promise has been made, that they who turn many to righteousness, shall shine like stars for ever and ever.

But how shall those who are doomed to business and labour, turn many to righteousness? Such is the constitution of human society, that all cannot be missionaries; all cannot apply themselves to the spiritual concerns of others. This Society enables all to contribute to the spiritual improvement of all. The Bible is the best of missionaries. It will reach where no preacher can penetrate; it will preach where he cannot be heard; it will reprove, alarm, advise, console in solitude, when no passion interferes to drown its voice. Of these missionaries thousands may be sent abroad, and where the seed is abundantly sown, we may reasonably hope for an abundant harvest.

Though the diffusion of the scriptures is the great end of our institution, yet another blessing will also spring from it. Too long have Christians been divided. Sect has been opposed to sect; angry controversies have agitated the Church; misrepresentations have been made, and believed; and good men, who ought to have loved each other, have been kept asunder by prejudices, which were the offspring of ignorance.

In this Society, the most discordant sects will meet together, engaged in a common cause; prejudices will abate; asperities will be softened; and when it is found, as undoubtedly it will be found, that the same love of God and of man animates all real Christians whatever may be their outward rites, or forms of ecclesiastical discipline, that most of them agree in fundamental doctrines, and that their differences principally relate to points of little practical importance, there must be an increase of brotherly love, and of a truly catholic spirit.

Sir, I pretend not to see more clearly than others through the dim veil of prophecy, but if the predictions which foretel a millennial period of happiness on earth, are ever to be literally fulfilled, it can only be by the accomplishment of another prophecy, "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." Let us then be blessed instruments in the diffusion of this knowledge; that having contributed to the triumph of the Redeemer's cause, we may be permitted to partake it. Then we shall be entitled to address the Christian Church in the exalting strains:

The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay;
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fixed his word, his saving power remains,
Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own Messiah reigns.